

Maintaining a thorough fishing log can help one grow and mature as an angler. I kept track of the details related to all the fishing trips I made from about 1990 through early 2002. The purpose of recording all these details over time is to provide assistance to one's memory. Without accurate records, memories of past fishing trips tend to become fuzzy and generalized. All kinds of things become exaggerated, including the severity or beauty of the weather, the ease or difficulty of the catching and the number and size of fish caught. Relying on inaccurate recollections of events is an inefficient way to process details related to growth and development; recording specifics helps one proceed more efficiently and accelerates the learning curve. Ideally, an entry in a fishing log includes as much detail as one can manage. All or most of the following data related to a trip should be recorded: the date and time frame, number of anglers involved, weather conditions, tide level and movement, water quality, moon phase and of course locations, lures and presentations tried (both productive and non-productive ones). Pasting pictures of fish caught onto the page can be fun and certainly stirs the memory poignantly. Creating a short paragraph at the end of an entry to include comments and observations does the same. For a more detailed discussion of this topic, see my article in the June 2012 issue of *Texas Saltwater Fishing Magazine*. To download a template useful for creating fishing log entries of the kind described above, click on the text link [fishinglogtemplate.xlsx](#) or [fishinglogtemplate.xls](#) and save on the computer. Then, make a copy of the template each time, enter the trip data in the cells, name and save. Storing the template and all finished entries in a folder will complete the creation of a "log", which can then be printed and turned into a hard copy if desired. Then it's possible to take the last step in maximizing the utility of a fishing log--study it and reflect on the content thoughtfully.